

FIRE SCENE SAFETY AND OPERATIONS TRAINING FOR POLICE OFFICERS

EXECUTIVE DEVELOPMENT

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ABSTRACT

The Valley Falls Fire District was encountering occasional problems at structural fire scenes that were interfering with the emergency operations. The problem was that the local police officers that arrived at the fire scene prior to the fire personnel were initiating fire scene actions that would place the officer in danger, or impede the fire suppression operation. The purpose of this research project was to evaluate the status of training in fire scene safety and operations that the police officers received, and then to design an improved training program for the police.

Evaluative and action research methods were employed to answer: 1. What does literature offer on the topic of fire scene safety for police officers? 2. What training or guidelines govern the actions of CPD officers at fire scenes? 3. Should the CPD be considered a first responder agency to VFFD structural fire incidents and trained accordingly? 4. What functions could a first responder agency safely perform at a VFFD structural fire incident?

Procedures included the survey of members of the police and fire agencies to identify the problem areas or any misunderstandings between personnel. A literature review was conducted of available published works relative to the problem. All data was collected and organized. Based upon the results which indicated the need for cooperation and interagency training between police and fire agencies, a model training program was developed.

Recommendations stated include the need for all CPD officers to receive fire scene training. The VFFD should work with the CPD to design and deliver the training. The training should be given annually. An evaluation system should be employed to assure quality and keep training current. The police academy should be offered the training program for use in recruit training.

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INTRODUCTION

Safe and effective fire scene operations require the coordinated efforts of all public safety agencies involved at the incident. In the community of Cumberland, Rhode Island; the Cumberland Police Department (CPD) and the Valley Falls Fire District (VFFD) personnel are simultaneously dispatched to structural fires occurring in the Valley Falls area of town. The problem is that CPD officers often arrive at fire scenes **prior** to VFFD personnel and initiate actions that are unsafe and / or impede fire suppression operations.

The purpose of this research is to evaluate the current training that CPD officers receive related to the stated problem and then to design a new training program that will increase the safety and operational effectiveness of CPD officers at fire scenes.

Evaluative and action research methods are employed to answer the following questions:

1. What does literature offer on the topic of fire scene training for police officers?
2. What training or guidelines govern the actions of CPD officers at fire scenes ?
3. Should the CPD be considered a “first responder agency” to VFFD structural fire incidents and trained accordingly?
4. What functions could a “first responder agency” safely perform at a VFFD structural fire incident.

BACKGROUND AND SIGNIFICANCE

The town of Cumberland has a reported population of 31,840 (US census 2000) and covers an area of 28 square miles in the northeast corner of Rhode Island along the border of Massachusetts. Approximately 10,000 people reside in the lower 1.1 square miles of town in the village of Valley Falls. While the majority of town is comprised of single family homes in a suburban setting, Valley Falls is more congested and industrial. In addition to

numerous single family homes, there are many multiple dwelling structures and commercial buildings including large brick mill facilities. The overall economic profile of Valley Falls is lower middle to middle income households. Public services provided by town government include : police, emergency medical services, schools, and public works. Trash collection is provided by a vendor on contract to the town.

Fire protection services are delivered by four independent fire district organizations. Each fire district operates as a distinct and separate entity. Each fire district is funded by a “fire tax” levied on property located within its borders. Although they are administratively separate, the fire operations are conducted as though there were only one big fire district covering the town. There is an excellent relationship between the fire districts including shared training. The fire districts share a common radio frequency and utilize an Incident Command System at emergency scenes. A total of 55 career firefighters supported by approximately 45 active “on call” firefighters are members of the fire districts.

The Valley Falls Fire District employs 12 career firefighters supported by 14 “on call” staff. The VFFD operates two engine companies, one truck company, and two support vehicles from a single fire station located in the center of the district. The annual budget is approximately 1.1 million dollars (VFFD Annual Report – June 2001).

The Cumberland Police Department employs 47 sworn officers supported by 9 non-sworn personnel. All sworn officers are graduates of the Rhode Island Municipal Police Academy basic recruit training program. The CPD annual budget is 2.4 million dollars (CPD Annual Report- February 2001). Radio dispatching for police, fire, and emergency medical services is handled by a single dispatcher on duty in the police station. The dispatch operation is considered a division of the CPD and command of the dispatchers is governed by the

CPD. Rhode Island utilizes a statewide Enhanced 911 emergency reporting system, and all 911 calls are routed to a central facility before being routed to the appropriate city or town public safety dispatch center.

Upon receipt of a reported structure fire within the Valley Falls Fire District, the CPD dispatcher will immediately dispatch CPD patrol officers to respond as well as the VFFD. In the past, there have been numerous incidents where the CPD officers have arrived at the fire scene before the arrival of VFFD personnel. The actions taken by early arriving CPD officers has varied greatly at these incidents; some officers would simply assume a traffic control function, some would enter the burning structure to conduct an inquiry or evacuation of occupants. Other actions include blocking the nearest fire hydrant with the unattended patrol vehicle or abandoning the patrol vehicle in a position which impedes the deployment of fire apparatus or equipment. Presently, the situation is much the same, that is, unpredictable as to what the VFFD officer in charge should expect to encounter at a fire scene where the CPD has arrived first.

Unless efforts are made to educate the CPD officers differently, VFFD personnel expect that the future holds much the same as the past related to this problem. The problem has been occurring on occasion for as long as even the most senior members of the VFFD can remember.

A survey of VFFD career personnel (VFFD Training Division, 2001) indicates that VFFD career personnel have made previous attempts to bring the topic of CPD actions at fire scenes to the attention of those who can initiate positive change. The survey also indicates that as of June 2001, seemingly, everyone was aware of the problems, but little or nothing ever resulted from post-incident critique regarding the CPD activity in the early stages of a VFFD incident. The survey results also indicate additional complications sometimes arise because one group (VFFD) identifies fire protection as the primary function and the other group (CPD),

identifies law enforcement as the primary function. The situation is compounded by fact that the VFFD and the CPD report to separate controlling authorities. The CPD reports to the Mayor and Town Council, while the VFFD is governed by an elected Board of Fire Wardens within the fire district. The effectiveness of VFFD at fire scenes is directly impacted by the performance of the CPD at the fire scene. Furthermore, the VFFD incident commander (IC) inherits the fire scene problems that are created by unsafe or improper actions committed by any emergency team responder, including the CPD officers.

This research problem relates to the Executive Development course within the National Fire Academy 's (NFA) Executive Fire Officer Program, specifically in the "Working As A Team" section of the course. As stated within the NFA Executive Development Student Manual section 1 titled: "WHAT IS A TEAM?", a team is defined as: "A cohesive group that can work together effectively and efficiently to achieve commonly shared goals." As such, the CPD and the VFFD are members of the response team for structural fires in Valley Falls. Both agencies share the goal of protecting the lives of the citizens and of the emergency response personnel and must work in unison to accomplish that goal.

LITERATURE REVIEW

A review of literature offers a limited amount of published data on the topic of fire scene training for police officers. Morrison (1994) points out the lack of published information regarding the interrelationship of police and fire field operations. While there is no manual published which deals exclusively with police operations at fire scenes, articles on the subject were found in professional periodicals.

The apparent lack of police training for fire scene operations is also discussed by Morrison (1994) when he states:

Because police-fire coordination is such a vital function, some in law enforcement feel the topic is not sufficiently covered by a majority of the training facilities.

For example, in the State of Florida, basic law enforcement recruit training standards provide one hour of fire-related training, and one hour for crowd control. The actual duties of the police officer at the scene of a fire is described in only one paragraph of the instructor's manual (Morrison, 1994, p.31).

Emphasizing the necessity of cooperation of police and fire agencies operating at an emergency incident, Police Chief John M. Eller discusses the role of police, fire, and emergency medical service personnel at the scene of emergencies and critical incidents, when he states:

The ultimate goal of all the disciplines, of course, is to provide a safe and carefree environment to the citizens in the communities that they serve.

We are not so naïve as to believe that there isn't rivalry, competition, and just plain jealousy between the disciplines, but it would be nice to imagine all of them working in conjunction with each other without any negativity. I am sure that many of you have experienced the old Who's In Charge at various emergencies. Somehow, in the end, it all seems to come together and the job gets done, although someone's pride may have suffered.

On the other side of the coin many law enforcement, fire, and paramedic services work and train in conjunction with one another so that there is no friction when a critical incident arises. Obviously, this is the type of environment which all emergency services should strive for (Eller, 2000, p.70).

The Somerset County (New Jersey) Police Academy utilizes a two-day training session to train police recruits in fire scene operations. Norman B. Cetuk, Fire Training Course Coordinator, notes that the manner in which a police officer is trained will affect actual performance. He further states that when a life, including the police officer's own life is threatened, "instinct" will cause the officer to respond in the manner in which he or she was trained (Cetuk, 1992, p.89).

Regarding the instruction of police recruits on the topic of fire scene operations, Cetuk states:

Here was an opportunity to train new police officers as first responders to a fire. In addition, it was a way to expose police officers to some of the responsibilities and hazards firefighters face. As a result, police officers would be in a better position to assist firefighters during response to a fire scene, to evaluate a potential rescue, to assist in fire suppression and to conduct an initial fire/arson investigation (Cetuk, 1992, p.90).

Captain Bill Gustin of the Miami-Dade Fire Department, Florida has written and lectured on the topic of fire scene training for police officers. In an article published in 1993, Gustin states:

The fire department depends on the police for traffic and crowd control at fire scenes. Occasionally, police officers will rescue fire victims prior to the arrival of fire units. These heroic acts are commendable, but must always be weighed against the risk of injury or death in a very hazardous environment (Gustin,1993,p.12-13).

In another published article, Gustin identifies the importance of fire scene training for police officers, in which he refers to the need for: a good working relationship between police and fire, determination of which agency has command of certain types of incidents, and having

the fire service provide training for police officers in fire scene safety and operations to improve overall effectiveness of both agencies. (Gustin, 1996. pp. 94, 99).

When reviewing the training and guidelines that govern the actions of CPD officers at fire scenes it was explained that CPD officers are governed by federal and state laws, local ordinances, and CPD procedures and guidelines for field operations. Any scenario encountered by an officer in the field which is not covered by any of those listed procedures would revert to the officer utilizing his or her best judgment to handle the situation (C. Crocker, personal communication, September 21, 2001).

In an inquiry made to the Rhode Island Municipal Police Academy, the current curriculum of basic recruit police training involves 680 hours of training but contains no fire scene training at all (D. Ricciarelli, personal communication, September 27, 2001).

An examination of the Standard Operating Guidelines for the Valley Falls Fire District reveals that the actions of police officers at structural fire incidents is not addressed within the VFFD literature (Valley Falls Fire District, 2001).

An examination of the General Laws of the State of Rhode Island revealed that there is no requirement by law for police officers to receive training in fire scene operations currently. (Rhode Island General Assembly, 2001).

A review of professional fire service literature supports the idea of police as a “first responder” agency that will initiate actions at the fire scene. Webster’s II Dictionary defines the word: “first” as “coming before all others” and the word : “responder” as someone who “acts in return” (Webster’s II Dictionary, 1984, pp. 481,1001).

The National Fire Academy publication Initial Response to Hazardous Materials Incidents student manual defines a hazardous material as any substance (solid, liquid, or gas) capable of causing harm to people, property, and the environment. The manual defines a “first responder” as the individual who arrives first on the scene of a haz mat incident with the responsibility to act. Clearly, the structural fire with the products of combustion meets the NFA definition of a hazardous material, and the initial arriving police officer, who has a clear duty to act, meets the definition of a “first responder”.

To answer the question of identifying those functions that a “first responder” could safely perform at a VFFD structural fire scene, an examination into established “first responder” functions is conducted.

The NFA Initial Response to Hazardous Materials Incidents student manual explains:

The role of hazardous materials first responders is limited because, by definition, they are trained to function primarily in a defensive mode. Their foremost goals are to act safely, limit potential exposure to all persons, and provide timely information to the proper authorities. Additional training is required for more aggressive actions.

The first responder’s responsibilities can be defined under the following four general categories:

Recognition and Identification

- Recognize the presence of hazardous materials
- Identify the material, if possible
- Gather information

Notification

- Notify the proper authorities
- Call for assistance
- Provide updates

Isolation

- Set perimeters / zones
- Deny entry
- Evacuate

Protection

- Initiate the Incident Command System (ICS)
- Protect responders / public
- Initiate decontamination
- Initiate defensive tactics only (no intentional contact)

(NFA, 1992, pp. 1-3,1-4).

In summary of the literature, it is clear that more attention to the issue of fire scene training for police officers is warranted. Morrison (1994) points to a lack of published information, while also addressing the lack of fire scene training within the police academy training environment.

Eller (2000) brings up the importance of cooperation between police and fire agencies in handling emergency incidents. The manner that police officers are trained directly affects the performance of that officer at emergency incidents according to Cetuk (1992). The opportunity to improve police functions at fire scenes by exposing them to the firefighting operations through training would be beneficial also according to Cetuk (1992).

Gustin writes of how the fire service depends upon the police agencies for various functions at the fire scene. Gustin also stresses the importance of a good working relationship and clear designation of lines of authority at fire scenes. He adds that the fire service must give the police training to improve the safety and effectiveness of police at fire scenes.

PROCEDURES

- Step 1. A survey of VFFD career members was conducted to identify those fire scene actions committed by CPD officers which are considered to impede VFFD actions, or are unsafe, or both. The survey asked about specific unsafe actions or actions that impeded VFFD operations at a structural fire. Those surveyed were asked to comment only on events actually witnessed, not merely hearsay. The career staff of the VFFD was chosen because all apparatus operators and officers of the VFFD are career members. The surveys were anonymous.
- Step 2. A survey of CPD sworn officers to identify the source of training, past actions, and opinions regarding fire scene safety and operations for police officers. The CPD officers were asked to honestly reply concerning their own actions at past structural fire scenes. The surveys were anonymous.
- Step 3. A literature review was initiated at the National Fire Academy's Learning Resource Center (LRC) in June 2001. The literature review continued in August through September 2001 at the Cumberland Public Library in Cumberland, Rhode Island and at the Community College of Rhode Island Library in Lincoln, Rhode Island. Additional literature review took place utilizing the training library of the Valley Falls Fire District and the author's personal library, both located in Cumberland, Rhode Island.

- Step 4. Personal communications were conducted with the Training Officers for the following organizations: Cumberland Police Department, Rhode Island Municipal Police Academy, and the Assistant Training Officer for the Valley Falls Fire District.
- Step 5. A search of Internet websites on the topic of Fire Scene Training for Police Officers was conducted with zero results via search engines of America On Line, Yahoo, and Dogpile.
- Step 6. The Internet website www.firehouse.com was accessed via Dogpile.com search engine. After login and registration, a question was posted seeking information related to the subject of fire training for police officers. Results were negative.
- Step 7. All data was collected and organized.
- Step 8. Utilizing compiled data, fire service training manuals, and all literature applicable, a training curriculum for Fire Scene Safety and Operations for Police Officers was designed and constructed.

Assumptions and limitations: It is assumed that all data originating in assembled literature is accurate and truthful. It is also assumed that the survey responses from all personnel involved are an accurate and truthful response to the given questions. It is assumed that the knowledge base of those persons involved in personal communications related to the collection of data is of contemporary professional standard. The research project is limited not by the absence of available data, but by the absence of available published data on the topic. Other limitations include: personnel missing from survey participation due to vacation, sick leave, and other authorized absences. Limitations regarding the data collected as being the most recent available data still involves some data more than five years old.

Definition of terms:**Board of Fire Wardens:**

An elected five member commission to oversee the operation and business of the fire district.

On Call Firefighter:

A firefighter who is paid by each incident or “call” attended. Training sessions are also paid events.

Valley Falls Fire District:

A geographical area within the Town of Cumberland, Rhode Island that receives fire protection from the members of the VFFD.

RESULTS

The collected data indicates that the VFFD should design and deliver training to the CPD. The literature review supports the idea that the VFFD cannot expect the CPD to become better educated in fire scene safety and operations unless the fire service gets involved. As Gustin (1996) states: “don’t criticize the police too harshly if your department has made no effort to inform them in a constructive and diplomatic manner.” The misconceptions and good intentions that currently guide CPD officers at VFFD incidents must be corrected via a logical training plan.

The answer to research question # 1 “What does research offer on the topic of fire scene training for police officers is answered in the literature review discussions.

The answer to research question # 2 “What training or guidelines govern the actions of CPD officers at fire scenes is reduced to the following: Federal or state laws, local ordinances, CPD established policy or procedure (of which there are none that address fire scene safety), and

the officer's best judgment. There is no related training offered to new recruits at the Rhode Island Municipal Police Academy. Discussion is found in the literature review section.

The answer to question # 3 "Should the CPD be considered a first responder agency to VFFD structural fire incidents and trained accordingly?" is yes. It is a mistake to view the CPD as an outside support agency when in fact, the CPD officers are responding to fire incidents and directly participating within the hazard zone of the fire. Discussion is found in the literature review section.

The answer to question # 4 "What functions could a first responder agency safely perform at a VFFD structural fire incident?" is those elements of the established responsibilities of first responders found in the NFA student manual for the Initial Response to Hazardous Materials Incidents refined for use at a fire scene. Discussion found in literature review section.

The VFFD survey. In an attempt to identify actions of CPD officers at VFFD fire scenes that appear to be unsafe or impede the VFFD operation, or both, 11 VFFD career members were asked to participate in an anonymous survey and choose the most appropriate response. Out of 11 surveys issued, 8 were completed and returned.

1. Have you ever witnessed an action performed by a CPD officer that placed the officer in danger of injury or death?

(8 responses) 100 percent yes.

2. If you answered YES to question #1, indicate the activity the CPD was performing at the time.

(8 responses) 8 - entering burning building without proper protective equipment.

8 - operating on the fire scene without protective equipment

5 - operating in proximity to falling power lines

0 - have never witnessed unsafe activity by CPD

3. Have you ever witness a CPD officer perform an action that impeded the VFFD from efficient performance at a structural fire incident?

(8 responses) 8- have witnessed CPD patrol vehicles block apparatus access to fire building.

8- have witnessed CPD patrol vehicles block access to fire hydrants

0- have never witnessed an impeded activity.

4. Have you ever reported the unsafe or impeded action to a supervisor?

(8 responses) 6 – yes

2 - no

5. Would you recommend that CPD officers receive training on fire scene safety and operations?

(8 responses) 100 percent – yes

The CPD Survey. An assessment of the current level of training that CPD officers receive regarding fire scene safety and operations. Approximately 21 officers were on duty over the four day period of this survey. 17 surveys were completed and returned. The survey was anonymous.

1. As a police academy recruit, did you receive training related to fire scene safety and operations?

2- yes 15-no

2. Does the CPD offer fire scene safety and operations as an “in service” training topic?

1- yes 16- no

3. Does the CPD have a policy or procedure that addresses the actions of an officer who arrives at a structure fire prior to the arrival of the fire personnel?
5- yes 12- no
4. In your career at the CPD, have you ever entered a burning building prior to the arrival of the fire personnel?
8- yes 9- no
5. On how many occasions did you enter a burning building prior to the arrival of the fire personnel?
8- never 3- one incident 7- more than one incident
6. Have you ever received an injury resulting from your actions at a fire scene?
1- yes 16- no
7. Have you ever parked your patrol vehicle in a position that impeded the movement of fire apparatus or blocked a fire hydrant?
2- yes 15- no
8. Should police officers receive training in fire scene safety and operations?
16 – yes 1- no
9. Fire scene safety and operations should be taught:
1- police academy only 1- in service only
15- both academy and in service 1- should not be taught

DISCUSSION

The specific results of this research agrees with the findings of others reviewed in literature. Simply stated, the VFFD must work with the CPD to improve training for the CPD officers. Having CPD officers initiate actions based upon good intentions and not upon sound firefighting practices would probably result in “action” for the sake of “doing something”. As Chief Alan Brunacini of the Phoenix, Arizona states:

It is not uncommon for fire departments to begin operations before adequately reviewing all of the critical fireground factors. Fire attack can be an instinctive and action-oriented process that involves taking the shortest and quickest route directly to the fire. *Action feels good on the fireground; thinking delays action.* Beware of nonthinking attack and nonthinking attackers.

The study results did coincide with the findings of Gustin (1996) in that current conditions within the CPD and VFFD relationship could be improved by increased cooperation and training involving both agencies. The CPD and VFFD have never disagreed in the area of command of a structural fire incident (which this research is limited to).

The study results disagreed with Cetuk (1992) regarding the advanced training of police officers including the use of self contained breathing apparatus. The police and fire labor unions in the Rhode Island area would be reluctant to have police officers perform that level of firefighting training or duties. Also, the author disagrees with a crash course in the use of SCBA, believing that it would become a case where “a little knowledge is dangerous”. The author fully agrees with Cetuk (1992) in the overall belief that police should be trained in the basics of fire scene operations and safety for the benefit of the officers and the fire personnel.

The NFA (1992) student manual on Initial Response to Hazardous Materials Incidents appears to the author to be a logical base to work from in designing a training program for the CPD officers. The checklist of actions allowed for first responders who have limited training is clearly understandable.

The limited sources of available research and publications regarding fire training for police officers is discussed by Morrison (1994) and is supported by this research project. The author fully agrees with Morrison (1994) about the lack of related literature and also about the lack of police academy training curriculum in the area of fire training for police.

The VFFD and the CPD are in a win – win position regarding any increase in interagency training. The VFFD operations should see an improvement in efficiency, and the CPD should see the safety factor for the officers rise as well.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The research results support the following recommendations:

- That all CPD officers receive training in fire scene safety and operations.
- The VFFD work with the CPD training staff to design and deliver the training program.
- That training be given annually at a minimum.
- That an evaluation system be employed to ensure quality control and keep the program current.
- That the Rhode Island Municipal Police Academy be offered use of the program as a basis for future recruit training.

The future readers should be made aware that this program can be delivered while on duty and also be divided into 20 to 30 minute segments to allow the training to be delivered in segments as a portion of “roll call” at the start of the work shift for CPD officers.

The CPD and VFFD are reminded that such an undertaking can and will reap rewards provided that the needed organizational support is present for the delivery and continuity of such a project.

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APPENDIX A**VALLEY FALLS FIRE DISTRICT SURVEY**

In an attempt to identify actions of CPD officers at VFFD structural fire scenes that appear to be unsafe or impede the VFFD operation, or both, please indicate the most reliable, accurate response to each question. Please be completely truthful in your responses. If you do not know, or cannot recall specific information, please indicate so. This is an anonymous survey. This information is being gathered to help identify needed training topics for the CPD officers. This document is not intended to cast blame on any member of any agency.

This information is being collected as part of a research project for the National Fire Academy's Executive Fire Officer Program.

Thank you for your participation. Constructive comments are welcomed on the back of this form.

Respectfully,

Lt. John F. Walsh
VFFD
NFA – EFOP candidate

Please select your answer based upon events the YOU have ACTUALLY WITNESSED:

1. Have you ever witnessed an action performed by a CPD officer which placed that officer (or anyone else) in danger as a direct result of the officer's action(s)?

☐ yes

☐ no

☐ not sure
2. If you answered YES to question # 1, indicate the activity that the CPD officer was performing at the time of occurrence.

☐ entering burning building without protective equipment

☐ operating on the fire scene without protective clothing

☐ operating in proximity to falling power lines

☐ have never witnessed unsafe activity by CPD officers
3. Have you ever witnessed a CPD officer perform an action that impeded the VFFD from performing efficiently at a structural fire incident?

☐ have witnessed CPD patrol vehicle block fire building access

☐ have witnessed CPD patrol vehicle block access to fire hydrant

☐ have never witnessed such activity.
4. Have you ever reported the unsafe or impeded action(s) to a supervisor of VFFD?

☐ yes

☐ no

☐ not sure

APPENDIX B**CUMBERLAND POLICE DEPARTMENT SURVEY**

This survey is intended to identify the current level of training that Cumberland Police Department officers receive on the topic of Fire Scene Safety and Operations. The goal is to develop a training program that will increase officer safety at fire scenes.

Please restrict your responses to actual training received as a police officer.

This data is being collected as part of research being conducted for the National Fire Academy's Executive Fire Officer Program.

This is an anonymous survey. Please feel free to state true beliefs without risk.

Thank you for participating. Constructive comments are welcomed on the back of the form.

Respectfully,

Lt John F Walsh
VFFD
NFA-EFOP candidate

These questions refer to the scene of a structure fire only, please do not include motor vehicle accidents or hazardous materials incidents as a basis for reply.

1. Did you receive fire scene safety training in the police academy?
☐ yes ☐ no ☐ not sure
2. Does the CPD offer fire scene safety training via in service training?
☐ yes ☐ no ☐ not sure
3. Does the CPD have a policy or procedure which addresses the actions of an officer who arrives at a fire PRIOR to the fire department?
☐ yes ☐ no ☐ not sure
4. In your CPD career, have you ever entered a burning building prior to the arrival of the fire department?
☐ yes ☐ no ☐ not sure
5. On how many occasions did you enter a burning structure prior to the arrival of the fire department?
☐ never ☐ one incident ☐ more than one incident
6. Have you ever been injured at the scene of a fire?
☐ yes ☐ no ☐ not sure
7. Have you ever parked your patrol vehicle in an area that impeded fire apparatus in some manner or that blocked the fire hydrant?
☐ yes ☐ no ☐ not sure
8. Should CPD officers receive fire scene safety and operations training?
☐ yes ☐ no ☐ not sure

9. Fire scene safety and operations training should be taught :

- ☐ to police academy recruits only
- ☐ in service at CPD
- ☐ both- academy and CPD
- ☐ should not be taught as a police topic

APPENDIX C

MODEL TRAINING FORMAT

Utilizing an outline of responsibilities for first responders (haz mat) IRHMI format, the police officer would apply similar actions to the FIRE scene. Treat the fire scene as you would a HAZMAT scene.

RULE OF THE ROAD:

Position your patrol vehicle at the scene in a logical manner. The fire department needs complete access to the Fire Building and surround property, and to the fire HYDRANTS in the vicinity.

RULE OF THE FIRE SCENE:

Role of the Police Officer at a fire scene (prior to arrival of fire personnel)

- I. Recognition and Identification
 - a. identify building type, size, occupancy
 - b. ascertain if all persons are evacuated
 - c. if not, stay in safe zone (outside) and have occupants come to officer
 - d. determine if persons are unable to evacuate (handicapped, etc...)
 - e. determine best information regarding likely location in building
 - f. gather all info, include special hazards of property, animals in bldg, etc...
 - g. conduct 360 degree view of building, look for signs of victims and any info the fire department can use when they arrive.

II. Notify

- a. relay info to dispatcher for relay to fire department
- b. include : building size, number of floors, fire / smoke conditions
victim info, any info concerning life safety.
- c. assess need for additional PD support as policy allows
- d. provide updates to dispatcher

III. Isolate

- a. set up perimeters / keep public back from incident
- b. deny entry to fire building...prevent reentry to bldg by occupants
- c. evacuate as needed....anticipate fire spread...take needed actions

IV. Protection

- a. protect responders and public
- b. treat fire building as a hazardous site which requires
special training, protective clothing, self contained breathing apparatus

NOTES:

Remember the role of the initial arriving police officer is crucial to overall incident success. Always operate in a DEFENSIVE MODE on the fire scene. Stay within the limits of your training and protective equipment.